

SAM BELL MAXEY HOUSE

— STATE HISTORIC SITE —

Paris, Texas

Pre-Visit Guide

Grade 7

Overview: Meet the Maxeys

Sam Bell Maxey was a successful lawyer, military veteran, and a two-term U.S. Senator. Sam Bell and Marilda Maxey completed their impressive home in Paris, Texas, in 1868, during the period of Reconstruction. All who lived and worked at Maxey House lived through a socially, politically, and economically chaotic time in Texas history.

Grade 7 Social Studies TEKS

(5) History. The student understands how events and issues shaped the history of Texas during the Civil War and Reconstruction. The student is expected to:

(C) identify significant individuals and events concerning Texas and the Civil War.

(6) History. The student understands how individuals, events, and issues shaped the history of Texas from Reconstruction through the beginning of the 20th century.

(21) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired through established research methodologies from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:

(A) differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about Texas;

(B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;

(C) organize and interpret information from outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps

Materials

- Historical images for display/distribution
- Graphic organizers

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Vocabulary

- **artifact:** something made and used by people in the past.
- **general:** a high-ranking senior military officer in the Army
- **Reconstruction:** a period after the Civil War (1865-1877) during which efforts were made to reunite the divided country and determine how freed slaves would be integrated into American society
- **senator:** an elected member of a state or national assembly who vote on laws. Prior to the passage of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1913, senators such as Sam Bell Maxey were elected or chosen by members of each state's legislature rather than voters.

Historical Context

Sam Bell Maxey was a successful lawyer, Confederate general, and a two-term U.S. senator. Sam Bell and Marilda Maxey completed their impressive home on Church Street in 1868, during the period of Reconstruction. This was the time after the Civil War (1865-1877) during which the U.S. government attempted to rebuild the south. The government controlled southern state leadership and enforced slave emancipation and citizenship rights. Many white southerners and former slaveowners were angered by the U.S. Army's occupation of the south. Former slaves, though free, were left without property, food, land, or jobs after the war. Reconstruction efforts focused on ensuring former slaves their citizenship rights like the rights to vote and marry, attempts to ensure safety and fair work contracts, and organizing education for freed peoples of all ages.

The Maxey's African American domestic staff may have included a butler, maid, and cook, who lived on site. Household servants began their day as early as 6 a.m. and worked until 10 p.m. every day of the week. A cook for a smaller household would probably wash and mend laundry and mind the children in addition to their cooking duties throughout the day. Other workers tended to the outdoor work of the estate including care of the horses, livestock, landscaping, flower gardens, and vegetable gardens. A servant named Nancy Newby and her husband John worked for the Maxeys from at least 1871 to 1880. Nancy had been formerly enslaved by the Maxey family and had traveled with them from Kentucky to Texas. In 1871, Nancy made a total of \$35.65 for the year. John made less money and took out loans from the Maxey family. While they worked at Maxey House, these staff lived in the servant quarters.

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Activity: At Home with the Maxeys

15 minutes

Display/distribute the **resource images** of rooms at the Maxey home.

Ask the following questions for discussion as students analyze the photos:

- What details in the photos tell you about the Maxey's social standing? Give examples.
- What activities might have taken place in these rooms?
- What similarities and differences do you see between the Maxey house's rooms and rooms in today's houses?
- Why are historical photographs valuable?

Activity: Meet Mr. Maxey

20 minutes

Display/distribute the **biography** of Sam Bell Maxey. Read it aloud or ask for volunteer readers.

After reading, discuss these questions as a class:

- What careers did Sam Bell Maxey have?
- Why did Maxey have to ask the U.S. president for a pardon after the Civil War? Do you think this was fair? Why or why not?
- What do you feel was Maxey's most important accomplishment? Why?
- How does the Maxey State Historic Site help tell the story of Texas?

Have students create a timeline of the major milestones in Sam Bell Maxey's life.

Activity: Mapping Paris, Texas

35 minutes

Display/distribute the **1885 Bird's Eye View of Paris, Texas**. (A higher resolution map requiring Adobe Flash is available at [http://www.birdseyeviews.org/zoom.php?city=Paris&year=1885&extra_info=.](http://www.birdseyeviews.org/zoom.php?city=Paris&year=1885&extra_info=))

Preview the map, including the title, subtitle, key, map inset, and any other additional information.

Ask students to look at the map to answer the following questions:

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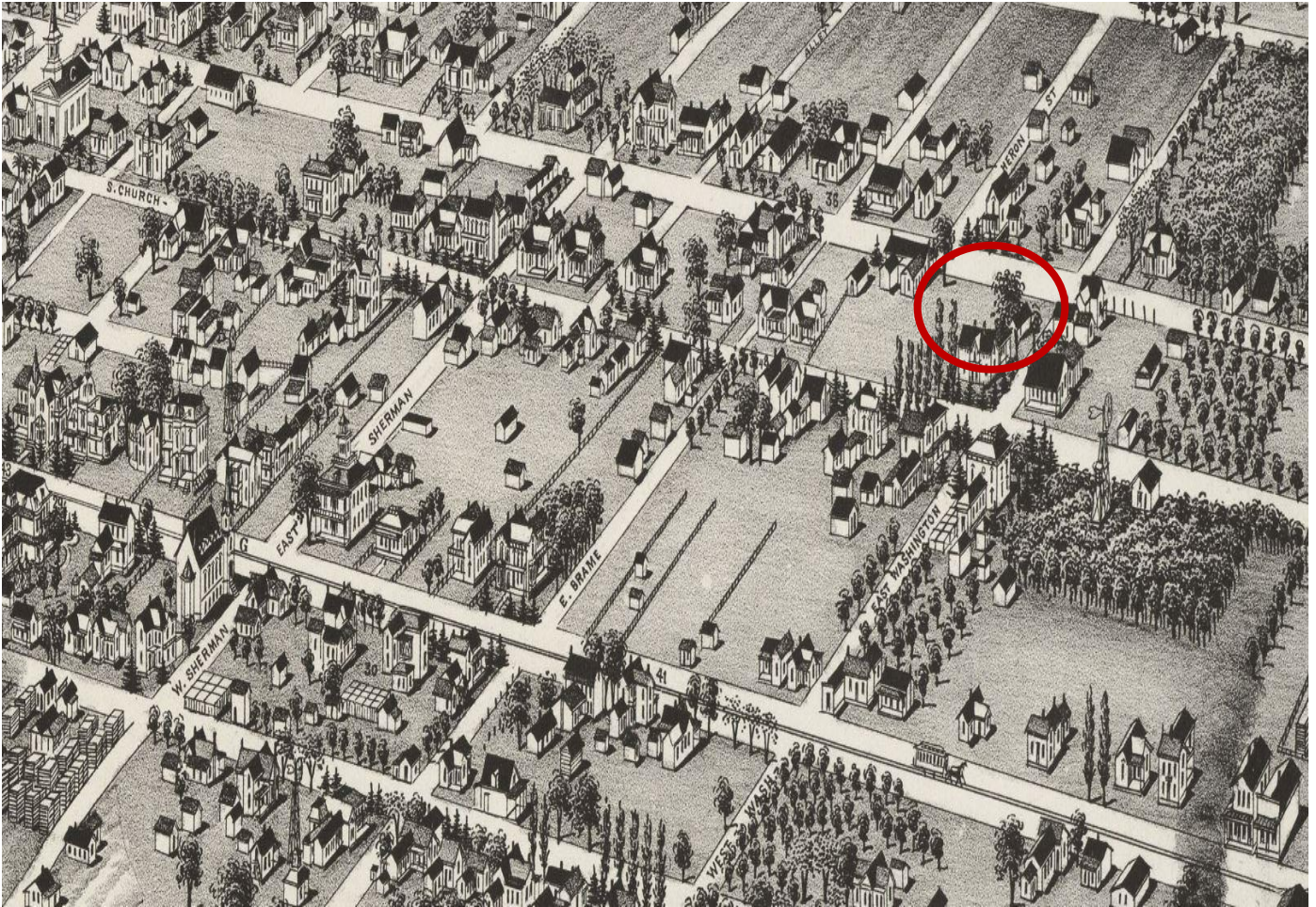
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- Find South Church Street and East Washington Streets on the map.
 - What building is located at the southwest corner? (*Maxey House*)



- Look at the map key information on the left side of the map, A-14.
 - How many churches are listed? (*9 churches, A-I*)
 - How many railroad depots were in Paris in 1885? (*2 depots, P and Q*)
 - Where could the people of Paris buy boots and shoes for themselves and saddles for their horses? (*Paris Dry Goods, 5; Wortham & Co., 7; John Straub, 11*)
 - What do you notice about one of the churches? Why was it listed like this? (*specifically listed as a “colored” church, I; segregation*)

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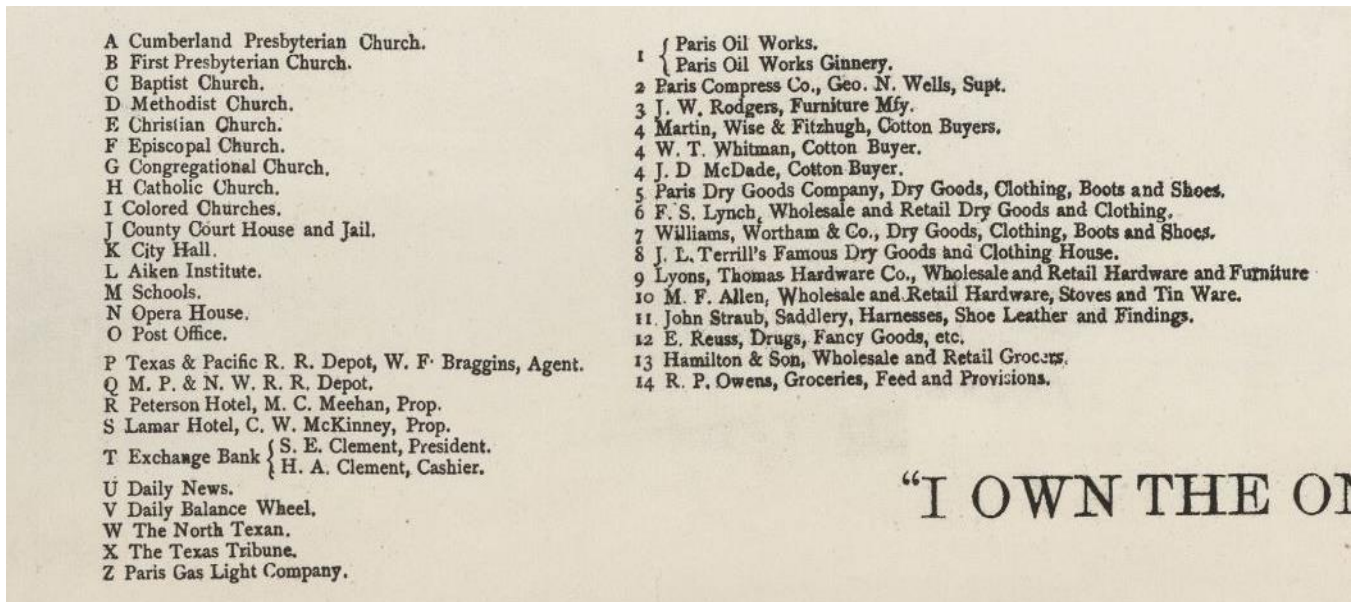
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- Where could the people of Paris go to buy furniture? (*J.W. Rodgers, 3; Thomas Hardware Co., 9*)
- Where could the people of Paris go for entertainment? (*Opera House, N*)
- What were the names of hotels in Paris? (*Peterson Hotel, R; Lamar Hotel, S*)
- What industries are represented on the map? (*gas, Z; oil, 1*)



Assessment

Evaluate student work for completeness and understanding.

Take-home Extension

Distribute **Maxey House KWL charts**. Tell students to complete the K and W columns of the chart and bring it back to class. They will complete the chart as a Post-Visit activity.

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Additional Resources & Extensions

The Portal to Texas History

<https://texashistory.unt.edu>

The Handbook of Texas Online

<https://tshaonline.org/handbook>

Library of Congress

<https://loc.gov>

- Web Guide—African American Sites in the Digital Collections
“1861-1877: Civil War and Reconstruction”
<http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/afam/afam-1861.html>

Facing History and Ourselves

www.facinghistory.org

- Race in U.S. History
<https://www.facinghistory.org/topics/race-us-history>
- The Reconstruction Era
<https://www.facinghistory.org/reconstruction-era>

National Park Service

- Reconstruction Era National Historical Park
<https://www.nps.gov/reer/index.htm>
- The Era of Reconstruction 1861-1900 Theme Study
<https://www.nps.gov/reer/index.htm>

Zinn Education Project

- Teach Reconstruction Campaign
<https://www.zinnedproject.org/campaigns/teach-reconstruction/>
- If We Knew Our History
<https://www.zinnedproject.org/if-we-knew-our-history/>
- Related Resources
<https://www.zinnedproject.org/collection/reconstruction/>

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Teaching Tolerance – Teaching Hard History

- A Framework for Teaching American Slavery

<https://www.tolerance.org/frameworks/teaching-hard-history/american-slavery>

Digital History

- Reconstruction

<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/era.cfm?eraID=8&smtID=1>

National Endowment for the Humanities EDSITEment!

- The Battle Over Reconstruction curriculum unit

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/curriculum-unit/battle-over-reconstruction>

Activity Image: Maxey House



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Activity Image: Maxey House Library



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Activity Image: Maxey House Parlor



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Activity Image: Sam Bell, Marilda, and Dora Maxey



Texas State Library and
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Activity Resource: Sam Bell Maxey Brief Biography

Sam Bell Maxey was born in Kentucky in 1825. He graduated from West Point Military Academy and fought in the U.S. Army during the Mexican-American War. After the war, he left the army and returned to Kentucky, where he joined his father's law firm. Sam married Marilda Cass Denton in 1853. In 1857, the family moved to Paris, Texas. They raised an adopted daughter, Dora Bell Maxey, and their great-nephew, Sam Bell Maxey Long.

Sam Bell Maxey joined the Confederate Army at the start of the Civil War. He rose to the rank of major general. He was Commander of Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) and Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Confederate States of America from 1863 to 1865. When the Confederate Army surrendered to the Union Army, the Confederate Army officers were stripped of their rights as citizens and were considered to be traitors to the United States.

At the end of the war, Sam Bell Maxey had to ask the President Andrew Johnson for a pardon, or forgiveness, in order to recover his property and rights as a citizen of the reunited country. The governors of Texas and Kentucky each sent recommendations for Sam Bell Maxey. Ulysses S. Grant, former commanding general of the Union Army and Maxey's former West Point classmate, also supported him. In 1867, Sam Bell Maxey received his pardon and returned to his work as a lawyer.

The next year, Sam Bell and Marilda built their beautiful home on Church Street. They entertained many important people from Paris and around Texas in their home. From 1874-1886, Sam Bell Maxey represented Texas in Washington, D.C. as a U.S. Senator. Known as a hard worker, he had an influence on Native American affairs, railroads, and post offices.

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Activity Resource: 1885 Bird's Eye View Map of Paris, Texas

Citation: Henry Wellge (1850–1917). *Paris, Texas. County Seat of Lamar County*, 1885. Lithograph, 16.3 x 24.9 in., by Beck & Pauli, Litho. Milwaukee, Wis. Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, (Accessed 12/27/2018) http://www.birdseyeviews.org/zoom.php?city=Paris&year=1885&extra_info=.



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Activity Resource: Maxey House KWL Organizer

KNOW	WANT TO KNOW	LEARNED

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Site Visit Recommendations

- Complete the pre-visit lesson or other introductory lessons prior to your field trip.
- Divide students into small groups, each with an adult chaperone.
- Make sure students bring pencils. Pens and markers are not allowed in the exhibits.

Information

To schedule a site visit field trip for your students, please call 903-785-5716.

For admission prices and hours of operation, please visit us online at <http://visitsbmh.com>.

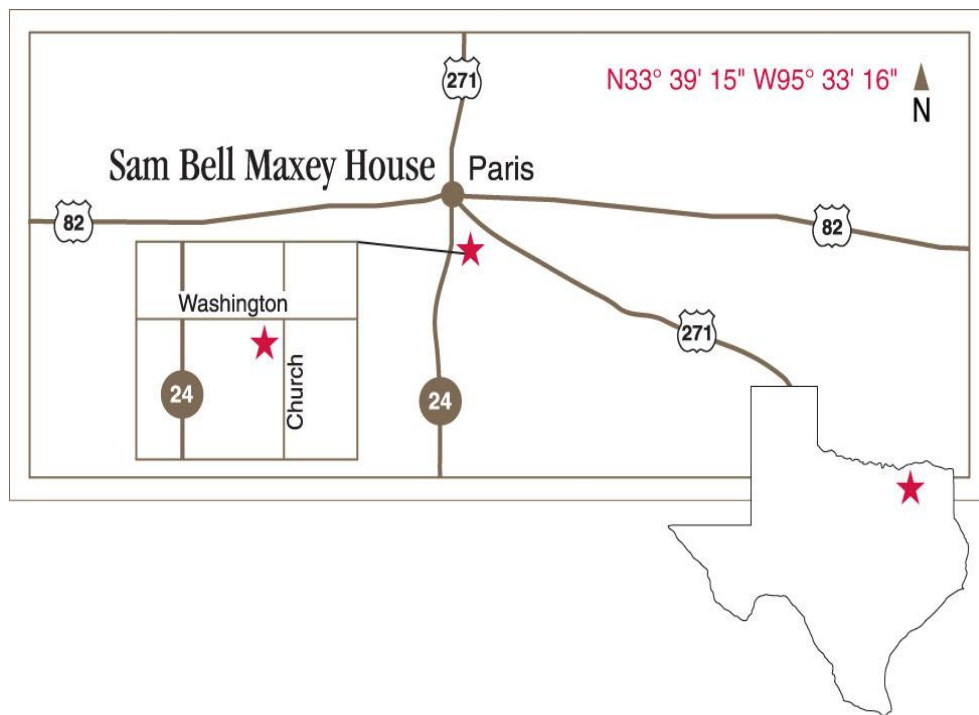
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